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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 071679

15
ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /011 R

66620
DRAFTED BY:S/S-O:LMATTESON
APPROVED BY:S/S-O:)LMATTESON
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O 290851Z MAR 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 071679

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOL REPEAT SAIGON 3734 SENT ACTION SECSTATE MARCH 29, 1975

QUOTE

S E C R E T SAIGON 3734

EXDIS

WARNING--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS
INVOLVED/NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 DECLASSIFICATION DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE
TAGS: AEMR SREF VS
SUBJECT: REFUGEES EVACUATION FROM DANANG

REF: (A) STATE 071283; (B) SAIGON 3697

1. IT SEEMS FROM REF A THAT THE EXTREME EMERGENCY NATURE OF THE SITUATION AND THE VERY REAL POTENTIAL FOR A MASSIVE TRAGEDY IS STILL NOT UNDERSTOOD. THE FACT OF THE MATTER, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE SITUATION IS SO EXTREMELY SERIOUS THAT NOTHING BUT AN ALL-OUT EFFORT WITH EVERY AVAILABLE RESOURCE WILL BE MINIMALLY ADEQUATE.

2. NOR IS THIS A TIME WHEN WE SHOULD IMPOSE ON OURSELVES RESTRICTIONS
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SUCH AS THAT IN PARA 2 OF REF A OF NOT INVOLVING COMBAT EQUIPPED

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FORCES NOR REDEPLOYING EAGLE PULL ASSETS SINCE NO IMMEDIATE
EMERGENCY THERE ANTICIPATED. ON THE CONTRARY, WE BELIEVE
THAT FAILURE ON OUR PART TO MOVE MASSIVELY AND WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS
IN THIS HUMAN EMERGENCY WILL NOT BE UNDERSTOOD.

3. AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS GOING ON WE HAVE JUST BROADCAST THE
FOLLOWING FLASH MESSAGE TO ALL NEARBY SHIPPING AT THE REQUEST OF THE
US TUG OSCEOLA WHICH IS NOW IN THE DANANG HARBOR AREA WITH
BARGES HAVING ALMOST 8,000 REFUGEES ON BOARD:

QTE: CAPTAIN US TUG OSCEOLA WHO HAS SIX US EMBASSY PERSONNEL
ABOARD REQUESTS, AND US EMBASSY SAIGON CONCURS, IMMEDIATE
ASSISTANCE FROM ALL SHIPS IN VICINITY OF DANANG TO PICK UP VIETNAMESE
REFUGEES IN LARGE NUMBERS WHO ARE NOW BOTH ABOARD TUG AND ON
BARGES. OTHER US TUGS ALSO IN DANANG HARBOR IN SAME CRITICAL
SITUATION. UNQTE

4. ANOTHER ILLUSTRATION OF THE SITUATION IS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE
BROADCAST FROM THE VIETNAMESE TELECOMMUNICATIONS STATION IN DANANG
ON MARCH 29:

QTE: SPEAKING FOR ALL THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS EMPLOYEES NOW
TRAPPED IN DANANG, WE DON'T HAVE WAY TO EVACUATE. THE SITUATION
IN DANANG AT THIS TIME IS EXTREMELY HEART-RENDING; THERE WAS NO WAY
FOR US TO KNOW WHO WOULD BE SPARED AND WHO WOULD BE LOST. I BEG
YOU TO MAINTAIN COMMUNICATIONS CONTINUOUSLY. THE ELECTRICITY IS
OUT ALL OVER THE PROVINCE, AND THERE IS NOT GASOLINE AVAILABLE. FOR
THE LAST TIME WE BID YOU A FINAL FAREWELL.

THE ELECTRICITY AND WATER ARE OFF IN DANANG. WE TRIED TO GET
A SMALL AMOUNT OF GAS FOR THE GENERATOR, BUT WITH CIRCUMSTANCES
SUCH AS THIS, IT WON'T BE MUCH LONGER. THE FUEL IN THE COMPOUND
IS GONE.

A FEW OF THE EMPLOYEES WHO HAD MONEY WERE ABLE TO LEAVE,
BUT WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY AND CANNOT GO. A BOAT OUT TO
THE SHIPS COSTS AROUND 100,000 PIASTERS SO WHERE DO WE HAVE
MONEY TO CHARTER A BOAT.

THERE IS NO ORDER IN THE CITY AND THE SHOOTING IS MORE THAN
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YESTERDAY EVEN THOUGH THE I CORPS COMMANDER ORDERED (ORDER
RESTORED) BUT NO ONE HAS EXECUTED THE ORDER AND NO POLICE ARE
SEEN ON THE STREETS AS WELL AS MILITARY POLICE. ORDERS ARE ORDERS
BUT WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANYONE EXECUTE THE ORDERS.

THE FUEL IS ALMOST GONE AND IN A FEW MORE HOURS, IT WILL
BE COMPLETELY GONE. IF WE DON'T ANSWER WHEN YOU CALL YOU WILL
KNOW WE HAVEN'T ANY ELECTRICITY. UNQTE

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5. IN SUMMARY, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT ANYTHING LESS THAN AN ALL-OUT UNRESTRICTED EFFORT WILL DO. ANY FAILURE ON OUR PART TO UNDERTAKE IT WILL HAVE THE MOST FAR-REACHING REPERCUSSIONS.

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